

of Representatives, by a vote of 278-67, rejected an adjournment resolution. Immediately following that vote, according to press accounts, the distinguished chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Mr. LIVINGSTON, sought recognition for the purpose of attempting to bring up a clean disaster assistance supplemental appropriation bill intended to provide sufficient and necessary assistance for a number of programs to ensure that there will be no delay in getting assistance to the victims of these natural disasters. As I understand it, the total amount of that proposal was approximately \$1 billion. Had the House taken it up and passed this interim disaster assistance bill, I am certain the Senate could have done the same and the President had indicated that he would have signed it.

The larger disaster assistance supplemental bill that is in conference contains some very controversial and difficult issues which have nothing to do with providing the necessary funds for disaster victims, or with the nearly \$2 billion contained in the bill for aid to our men and women in uniform around the world—particularly Bosnia—engaged in peacekeeping operations, or with the \$750 million in funding for veterans compensation and pension. The conferees are in agreement, to a large extent, with the funding issues in the bill. But, these contentious, extraneous issues have slowed the progress of the conference despite the skillful and patient manner with which the distinguished chairman of the conference, Mr. LIVINGSTON, has conducted each meeting of the conferees. He has shown the ability to proceed as expeditiously as possible, while at the same time protecting all Members' rights to fully air their views on each matter before the conference. I have nothing but high praise for his leadership, as well as that of the distinguished ranking member, Mr. OBEY, or of our chairman, Senator STEVENS, as well as for all of the chairmen and ranking members of this conference who have worked many hours to resolve most of the differences in the bill. I would have preferred, as I am sure all of the conferees would have preferred, to be able to stand here today urging the Senate to adopt a completed conference agreement on H.R. 1469, the emergency disaster assistance supplemental appropriation bill.

Since, for the reasons I have stated, that was not possible, I express to the American people and particularly to the hundreds of thousands of disaster victims throughout the country, my deep regret that their elected representatives in Congress have chosen to recess for the Memorial Day holiday without having taken any action to address their desperate need for Federal assistance. At the same time, I urge them not to despair and pledge my efforts to do all that I can to work with the distinguished chairman of the committee, Mr. STEVENS, and the distinguished chairman and ranking member

of the House Appropriations Committee, Mr. LIVINGSTON, and Mr. OBEY, to complete final action on H.R. 1469 as quickly as is humanly possible when the conference next convenes, hopefully during the first week of June.

NATIONAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES WEEK

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, this week is National Emergency Medical Services Week. The people who work and volunteer in the emergency medical services field provide an invaluable service for all American citizens—they provide us with a safety net. This is necessary because regardless of how careful we try to be, we are all subject to the whims of fate. Common sense and practicality are often not enough to prevent accidents caused by the carelessness of ourselves or others. In these times of need, we rely on dedicated emergency medical services personnel. They take care of us when we cannot take care of ourselves.

I want to take this time to recognize the special disposition that a person must have to be an emergency medical service worker. These people all share common characteristics such as the desire to help, as well as the ability to feel empathy for, the people they assist. Of course, kindness and willingness to help alone are not enough. These workers must also possess the skills needed to do the job and to do it well. These skills can only be acquired through hard work and dedication. The working lives of emergency medical service workers are characterized by a lack of predictability in both content and scheduling. They have no routine to rely on. They truly must be ready for anything at any time.

Although emergency medical service workers across the country have many things in common, they also face many different challenges and dangers every day. There are some who must fight traffic, some who fight long distances and bad roads, and some who are forced to face the fear and possibility of losing their lives in order to try and save ours. Despite all of the challenges and dangers faced by these dedicated workers, they continue to be efficient, to be dependable, and to be effective in saving lives day after day.

In a world which is fraught with peril, it comforts me to know that there are people that we can count on in our hour of need. And so, Mr. President, I am proud to recognize this week as National Emergency Medical Services week to acknowledge the important work and strong character of the dedicated emergency medical services personnel. We are fortunate to have this opportunity to show our appreciation for all of their tireless work on our behalf.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Thursday,

May 22, 1997, the Federal debt stood at \$5,344,819,275,286.24. (Five trillion, three hundred forty-four billion, eight hundred nineteen million, two hundred seventy-five thousand, seven hundred eighty-six dollars and twenty-four cents)

One year ago, May 22, 1996, the Federal debt stood at \$5,117,440,000,000. (Five trillion, one hundred seventeen billion, four hundred forty million)

Five years ago, May 22, 1992, the Federal debt stood at \$3,926,208,000,000. (Three trillion, nine hundred twenty-six billion, two hundred eight million)

Ten years ago, May 22, 1987, the Federal debt stood at \$2,289,817,000,000. (Two trillion, two hundred eighty-nine billion, eight hundred seventeen million)

Twenty-five years ago, May 22, 1972, the Federal debt stood at \$428,608,000,000 (Four hundred twenty-eight billion, six hundred eight million) which reflects a debt increase of nearly \$5 trillion—\$4,916,211,275,286.24 (Four trillion, nine hundred sixteen billion, two hundred eleven million, two hundred seventy-five thousand, two hundred eighty-six dollars and twenty-four cents) during the past 25 years.

HONORING ASTRONAUT JERRY LININGER

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, tomorrow we will welcome home a true American hero, Eastpointe, MI native, astronaut Jerry Lininger. Jerry is returning to Earth this weekend aboard the space shuttle *Atlantis* after a 5 month mission on the Russian space station, *Mir*.

I am sure that Jerry expected his 5 months in space to provide him with innumerable opportunities and challenges, but the challenges he and his crewmates faced were way beyond expectations. They had to fix antifreeze fume leaks which threatened the space station's air supply. The oxygen-generating systems malfunctioned, forcing the crew to activate three backup oxygen canisters each day to provide them with the oxygen they needed to breathe. And, Jerry and his Russian fellow scientists had to extinguish the worst fire ever aboard an orbiting human spacecraft, an ordeal which captured the attention of millions of people in the United States, Russia and around the world. It seemed from this earthly vantage point that the 10 plagues of space travel were being visited on *Mir*—leaks, lack of oxygen, humidity, fire, temperature, excess CO₂, loss of power, lack of supplies and replacement parts, claustrophobia, and separation from family. When the space shuttle *Atlantis* recently linked up with the *Mir* space station to deliver much needed repair parts and to pick him up, Jerry may have made the understatement of the year when he remarked to its crew members that it was "nice to see you."

While the drama played out in space, Jerry Lininger's professionalism came to the fore. He continued his work on

the scientific experiments he was scheduled to complete, including experiments on materials which may be used in future spacecraft, and tests on how living in space affected his immune system. He also brought his experiences home to Earth by posting letters to his son, John, on NASA's World Wide Web page, as well as by participating in the *Mir* international amateur Radio experiment. Using this new technology, Jerry linked up with a fifth grade class in Charlevoix, MI. In one of his messages to his son, Jerry explained one facet of life in space: "When running on the treadmill, we sweat. From our skin, the moisture evaporates in order to cool our bodies (By the way—those doggies you are so fascinated with use their tongues, panting, to 'sweat' and regulate their temperature). The sweat evaporates into the air. This water, along with all the other humidity in the air is condensed on cold coils (just like the outside of your cold bottle getting wet on a hot, humid day) and collected. Biocide is added, the condensate boiled, and we use it to drink or rehydrate our freeze-dried foods. Delicious.

We have all felt the joy which comes with returning home from a long trip, but there are few people alive who truly know the feeling Jerry Linenger will have after returning from 5 months orbiting the Earth. Jerry's wife, Kathryn, and young son, John, eagerly anticipate his return for many reasons, not the least of which is the fact that Kathryn is due to give birth to their second child in early June. It appears that Jerry will make it home in time.

I would like to express my deepest admiration for the accomplishments of Jerry Linenger. We can all benefit from his example of courage, perseverance and professionalism. Jerry has said that upon his return to Earth, he hopes to spend time with his family and dreams of "going up to Northern Michigan and finding an old timer that knows how to fish and doesn't like talking a lot . . . just sitting down by the stream and breathing fresh air in and the fresh water." I, for one, hope he gets that chance. I know my colleagues join me in welcoming Jerry Linenger back to Earth, and in congratulating him on a mission heroically accomplished.

REGARDING THE DEDICATION OF THE JACK SWIGERT MEMORIAL

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, today I take this opportunity to call my colleagues' attention to a historic event which occurred today in Statuary Hall, just down the hall from this chamber—the unveiling of Colorado's statue of Jack Swigert. I commend and applaud the efforts of all those Coloradans who helped to bring the Jack Swigert statue to Washington and Statuary Hall.

The inclusion of this statue would not be possible without the efforts of

many Coloradans, who I would like to thank for their tireless efforts.

Among the individuals who worked on this project, the members of the Jack Swigert Memorial Commission should be mentioned for their dedication. Holly Coors, Marleen Fish, Don Friedman, Dennis Gallagher, Virginia Swigert, and Carl Williams all worked tirelessly under the chairmanship of Hal Shroyer. Has has spent 10 years on this project, and I am happy that he can see his goal achieved today.

The Arapahoe County Republican Men's Club also stands out for its large contribution. Members lobbied the State legislature and donated substantial amounts of time and money in an effort to commission the statue.

Of equal importance to the effort was Veterans of Foreign Wars Chapter 11229. It was commissioned solely for the purpose of persuading the State legislature to create the statue of Mr. Swigert and put the initiative on the ballot. Mr. Swigert was a lifelong member of VFW Post No. 1, which is the oldest VFW in the Nation founded after the Spanish-American War.

Due to the dedicated efforts of these individuals and the many others involved in this project, Jack Swigert will be remembered and honored as a true American hero with this statue we dedicate to him today. And, his statue will represent Colorado with honor and distinction here in the U.S. Capitol for generations to come.

I thank the Chair and I yield the floor.

OUTSTANDING NM SMALL BUSINESSES

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I rise to honor New Mexico's outstanding small businesses and small business advocates as selected by the U.S. Small Business Administration. I will not be able to attend the awards luncheon but I do want to recognize the significant accomplishments of these New Mexican entrepreneurs.

NEW MEXICO SMALL BUSINESS PERSONS OF THE YEAR

The top SBA award this year goes to Mary Jean and Andrew Christiansen, owners of Elite Laundry Co. in Gallup, NM, who were selected as New Mexico Small Business Persons of the Year. The Christensen's are among the 53 top small businesses owners in the Nation who will be honored by the SBA in Washington, DC, later this year.

The Christiansens have created more than 70 jobs in a region of New Mexico that has one of the highest poverty rates in the nation. This family owned small business is also providing profit-sharing and retirement benefits, in a state where 71 percent of private sector employees have no pensions.

1997 EXPORTER OF THE YEAR

New Mexico recently received word from the Commerce Department that it has seen a 112 percent growth in exports, including a remarkable 256-per-

cent increase in trade with Asia. These achievements would not have been possible without the hard work and savvy of business-owners such as Kimberly de Castro, the 1997 New Mexico Exporter of the Year.

Ms. de Castro is the owner of Wildflower International Ltd., in Santa Fe, which provides brokering services to foreign buyers. Based on buyers' initial inquiries, Wildflower International researches the marketplace and provides buyers with options that meet their requirements. The trade company currently exports to China, Israel, Italy and Egypt and is actively negotiating sales in Taiwan and several other Asian countries.

1997 ADVOCATE AWARD WINNERS

Small business owners and entrepreneurs need champions who believe in what they're doing and give them advice, encouragement and assistance.

Michael G. Murphy, the assistant business editor for the Albuquerque Journal, is the 1997 New Mexico Media Advocate of the Year and also the 1997 Region VI Media Advocate of the Year. Previously the editor of the Albuquerque Business Times, Mr. Murphy has reported on issues and initiatives that have been informative and useful to the small business community as well as governmental officials.

The New Mexico Women in Business Advocate of the Year is Jennifer A. Craig, regional manager of the Women's Economic Self Sufficiency Team Office in Las Cruces. WESST Corp. is a nonprofit business and technical assistance organization that focuses on women and minority entrepreneurs. Since the Las Cruces office opened in 1995, more than 250 women have received assistance and more than 50 have started or developed their own businesses.

Teresa O. Molina, a vice president of 1st New Mexico Bank in Deming, has been selected as the New Mexico Financial Services Advocate. Ms. Molina is active in SBA lending and through her efforts, 1st New Mexico Bank awarded the first SBA 504 loan in my home State.

The 1997 New Mexico Minority Small Business Advocate is Anna Muller, the owner of NEDA Business Consultants in Albuquerque. Ms. Muller was a national leader in the effort to preserve and improve the SBA 8(a) Minority Enterprise Development program.

1997 SUBCONTRACTOR AND CONTRACTOR OF THE YEAR

Dennis A. Reasner, president of Albuquerque's Darco Products, Inc., is the 1997 Region VI Subcontractor of the Year. Armando De La Paz, president and CEO of Vista Technologies, Inc., in Albuquerque is the 1997 Region VI Prime Contractor of the Year.

Small businesses are the engine of New Mexico's—and the Nation's—economic growth. I commend these small business owners and advocates for their desire and commitment to create new jobs and new economic opportunities in